

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 were examined in the Office Action mailed March 2, 2006. The claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,108,190 to Nagasaki, *et al.* ("Nagasaki"), in view of European Patent Publication No. 1 052 309 A2 ("Bonderstam").

The Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of dependent claim 5, and to clarify the arrangements of the support member. Conforming amendments to the dependent claims have also been made. Claims 1-3 and 6-10 thus remain pending in the Application.

As amended, claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a process chamber with "a bottom plate made of a metal ceramics composite and fixed to said process chamber so as to form a reduced pressure space in said process chamber," and a placement stage which "is directly joined to a first part of said bottom plate, which first part is smaller than said bottom plate, and said seal member is located between said process chamber and a second part of said bottom plate other than said first part."

The Nagasaki reference is cited as teaching the placement stage 3 and supporting member 11 of the present invention, however, while Nagasaki is said to teach the joining of a support member to the metallic walls of a processing chamber, it is acknowledged to not teach the recited process chamber with a seal member between the support member and a wall surface of the chamber. March 2, 2006 Office Action at 2. The Bonderstam reference is cited as teaching a process chamber, with a seal member between a movable support member 18

(a bottom plate of the chamber). *Id.* at 3. However, unlike the present invention, the base plate 18 is: (i) movable; and (ii) does not serve as a support member but serves as a placement stage, *i.e.*, the member on which a substrate is placed, as confirmed by the Bonderstam specification: “In this embodiment [Fig. 3], the movable base of the reaction chamber acts as the substrate holder.” Bonderstam ¶ [0059].

As amended, claim 1 recites that the chamber bottom plate is fixed to the process chamber, whereas the bottom plate of the Bonderstam reference is movable with respect to the process chamber. Additionally, the bottom plate of the present invention is made of a metal ceramics composite material. Neither the Nagasaki reference nor the Bonderstam reference disclose or suggest a bottom plate made of a metal ceramics composite material. Moreover, with respect to the placement stage and bottom plate dimensions, the claimed placement stage of the present invention is smaller than its fixed bottom plate, and is joined to only a part of the bottom plate. In contrast, the movable base plate of the Bonderstam reference is substantially the same size as the placement stage on which a substrate is placed. Thus, no combination of Nagasaki and Bonderstam would result in the invention presently recited in amended claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-3 and 6-10.

### CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 1-3 and 6-10 are patentable over the cited references under § 103(a). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending

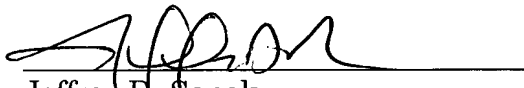
§ 103(a) rejection, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-3 and 6-10,  
is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in  
general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this  
should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as  
a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and  
please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit  
Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #010986.52734US).

Respectfully submitted,

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Jeffrey D. Sanok  
Registration No. 32,169  
Mark H. Neblett  
Registration No. 42,028

CROWELL & MORING LLP  
Intellectual Property Group  
P.O. Box 14300  
Washington, DC 20044-4300  
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500  
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844